



Edwin Marion Christensen, 94

July 17, 1902 - July 22, 1996

HARLAN - July 17, 1902, Edwin Marion Christensen was born to Mike and Margaret (Maggie) Christensen on a farm that bordered northeast Jacksonville. He was their only child. His paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Christensen and his maternal grandparents, Jens and Lena Christensen, immigrated from Denmark and lived in the Jacksonville area. Edwin, his mother and her family were members of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Edwin (Eddie) attended school in Jacksonville through the eighth grade. He was a good student and enjoyed acting in plays. He participated in home shows in the Danish Brotherhood Lodge Hall. After eight grade graduation, Ed farmed his father's land for one year and then the family moved to Harlan. He then enrolled in Harlan High School, graduated in 1923 and began working in his father's implement and auto business.

That same year in July he married Mary Valborg Petersen, daughter of Christian and Karen Petersen of Harlan, formerly of Monroe Township. They married at Atlantic and took a

honeymoon camping trip to Colorado. Two children were born, Jean Marilyn in 1927 and Donald Eddie in 1933. There were seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren. The family affiliated with the First Congregational Church of Harlan, now the Congregational United Church of Christ.

Ed became a Chevrolet dealer in partnership with his father in 1925, adding Buick in 1934. When his father died in 1931, he became the owner of both dealerships in partnership with his mother, later buying her share. He joined the two businesses into E.M. Christensen Auto Co. He was in business for 61 years until it was sold in 1986. In later years his son, Donald, became manager. Of over 100 dealerships in the Omaha zone, his firm was one of the top 35 that accounted for half of the business in that zone. He also owned the Audubon Chevrolet dealership for 5 years with Cliff Dent as a partner, 1960-65. He was active in the Harlan Community. During WW II he served 4 years on the Gasoline Rationing Board and finished 6 years on the Harlan School Board. He was a director of the Harlan National Bank for 47 years, a director of the Chamber of Commerce for several terms and served 4 terms as a trustee of his church. He was honored for his service to the community as one of the "Men of the Years" by the Chamber of Commerce. His wife, Mary V. Christensen, died at age 90 in 1994. In 1996 at age 93, he was healthy and alert and residing at the Baptist Memorial Home in Harlan. One of his favorite pastimes was taking a ride to see Jacksonville and Prairie Rose Lake. He died July 22, 1996 at the Jennie Edmundson Hospital in Co. Bluffs at age 94 years and five days.

Survivors are his daughter, Jean Doran of Harlan; his son, Donald Christensen (Elaine) of Rockledge, FL; seven grandchildren; six great grandchildren and other relatives.

Funeral services were held July 25, 1996 at the Congregational United Church of Christ in Harlan with Rev. C.G. "Gary" Nienkamp officiating. Burial was in the Harlan Cemetery with Doug Nelsen, Dan Rau, Elsie Myers, Vera Wunder, Dave Walter, Perry Kelley, Anker C. Rasmussen and Harold R. Olsen honorary casket bearers. Casket bearers were Mike Cooper, Pat Byrnes, Orv Roecker, Harold Schulte, James Halbersleben, Brad Schmitz, Terry Lauritsen and Steven F. Mores. Pauley Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.